

I CLAIM:

1. An airshaft for holding a roll of web material, comprising:

5 an elongate shaft body having a shaft axis and an outer cylindrical shaft surface formed with at least three longitudinally extending bladder retaining grooves, each of said bladder retaining grooves being generally inverted T-shaped and having a narrower access opening formed in said shaft surface and a wider retaining section disposed between said access opening and said shaft axis;

a set of elongate inflatable bladder members, each of which is received in said retaining section of a respective one of said retaining grooves; and

15 a plurality of roll contact pieces, each of which has a biased side disposed in said retaining section of one of said retaining grooves and in contact with said inflatable bladder member in said one of said retaining grooves, and a roll contacting side extending out of said one of said retaining grooves through said access opening of said one of said retaining grooves, said roll contacting side having a distal contact face;

20 wherein said roll contact pieces include a set of first roll contact pieces and a set of second roll contact pieces, said distal contact face of said roll contacting side of each of said first roll contact pieces forming a first height with said inflatable bladder member in

said one of said retaining grooves, said distal contact face of said roll contacting side of each of said second roll contact pieces forming a second height with said inflatable bladder member in said one of said retaining grooves, said second height being shorter than said first height;

whereby, when the roll of web material is sleeved on said shaft body, and when said inflatable bladder members are inflated, said distal contact faces of said roll contacting sides of said first roll contact pieces contact the roll of web material for holding the roll of web material on said shaft body, and said distal contact faces of said roll contacting sides of said second roll contact pieces contact the roll of web material for positioning stably the roll of web material on said shaft body.

2. The airshaft as claimed in Claim 1, wherein a total area of said distal contact faces of said roll contacting sides of said first roll contact pieces is less than that of said distal contact faces of said roll contacting sides of said second roll contact pieces.

3. The airshaft as claimed in Claim 1, wherein each of said bladder retaining grooves extends parallel to the shaft axis.

4. The airshaft as claimed in Claim 1, wherein each of said bladder retaining grooves extends along a twisted line with respect to the shaft axis.

5. The airshaft as claimed in Claim 1, further comprising an air pumping unit connected to said inflatable bladder members and operable so as to inflate said inflatable bladder members.

5 6. The airshaft as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said roll contact pieces are disposed side-by-side on said inflatable bladder member in said one of said retaining grooves.